

CUE

Handed - thought you may be interested.
— John Fox

The Coalition For a United Elizabeth

ON CUE

THE COALITION FOR A UNITED ELIZABETH
135 MADISON AVE., ELIZABETH, N.J. 07201

354-1811

May 1979
Vol. 2, No. 5

CHEMICAL CONTROL: ELIZABETH'S THREE MILE ISLAND?



Thousands of rusting drums sit among tank trucks on the grounds of Chemical Control.

The controversy surrounding the Chemical Control Corporation on S. Front Street has attracted its share of publicity and the usual political game of "who's to blame?" While John Surmay, Director of Elizabeth Health, Welfare and Housing blames the state with "the left hand didn't know what the right hand was doing," some state officials are saying the fault lies in the city.

On May 8 State Assemblyman Raymond Lesniak was quoted in the Daily Journal as saying "only incompetence, gross negligence or corruption could have allowed this danger to develop." This statement has even more meaning when you consider the fact that a former Elizabeth resident informed a city official about the severity of this problem TEN YEARS AGO! This resident claimed

he even went so far as to furnish photographs of the hazards to city officials but that nothing was ever done about the problem. Perhaps this is the incompetence and gross negligence that Assemblyman Lesniak meant when he made his statement.

Congressman Matthew J. Rinaldo also was critical of the way in which this hazard was dealt with. "It's just incredible that anyone would leave a chemical time bomb of this size on the city's doorstep for years and no one paid that much attention to it. The first time I saw it I couldn't believe that people could be so careless."

The situation at the chemical site has been changing on a daily basis. State workers at the site are uncovering new and different hazards with each day they inspect and move the rusting drums. To date explosive

compounds such as nitroglycerine and picric acid have been carefully removed to prevent a catastrophe. But other toxic chemicals continue to be found leaking out of decaying drums into sewers and the Arthur Kill.

Experts have said that the danger of explosions is great and a heat wave two weeks ago caused a minor incident when one of the drums did explode because of the heat.

While it is in the public interest to find out how this problem got to its present critical point, it is equally important to protect the lives and property of those who live and work in the Elizabethport area. The Coalition for a United Elizabeth supports an investigation into the cause of this incident, but would also like to see a quick and safe end to the danger posed by these toxic substances.

PUBLIC FORUM ON CHEMICAL WASTE

WEDNESDAY

JUNE 6, 1979, 7:30 p.m.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
SCHOOL #1

KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!

SPONSORED BY CUE